

Vol. 2, Issue 1  
Spring Issue 2011

# THE PULSE

PHOTOS BY LESLIE CAPO



## New Hospital – Groundbreaking

Hundreds of LSUHSC faculty, students, and staff joined local, regional, and state politicians for the official groundbreaking ceremonies for the New University Medical Center. Situated on 34 acres on a square bounded by Canal Street, South Galvez, Tulane Avenue and South Claiborne Avenue, the UMC will be the cornerstone of a biomedical district that will attract the world's top medical professionals while serving as a major training center for the education of medical professionals for generations to come. The new hospital will serve as an important referral center for patients from community hospitals throughout the region. The only hospital in South Louisiana with a Level 1 Trauma Center, the UMC will take on the most severely injured patients. Construction is expected to begin in late 2011 with tentative completion expected by the end of 2013. The combined UMC and VA medical centers are expected to generate an annual \$1.26 billion economic impact and create more than 19,700 permanent jobs in the New Orleans area.



### Name that Newsletter WINNER!

You responded, you voted, we listened!

Congratulations to

**Matt Giglia**

(SOM Class 2012) for the winning name in the  
"Name This Newsletter" competition!

### New Hospital Update

Want to keep on top of the latest  
on the New Hospital?  
Then visit this site to keep on  
top of the progress!

<http://www.newhospital.org/>



# LSU Faculty and Students Celebrate DNA Day at the Zoo

by Leslie Capo

To celebrate DNA Day, which commemorates the completion of the Human Genome Project in 2003 and the discovery of the double helix of DNA in 1953, the Department of Genetics sponsored hands-on experiments at the Earth Lab in the Audubon Zoo. Dr. Fern Tsien, accompanied by Dr. Udai Pandey from Genetics and Dr. Sunyoung Kim of Biochemistry along with graduate students from both departments, provided opportunities for children, parents, and teachers to learn more about genetics and DNA.



A Zoo visitor watches fascinated as DNA is isolated from strawberries.

Through these workshops, participants learned how to isolate DNA from strawberries using household objects. This process demonstrated how all living things (plants, humans, animals) are made up of cells, inside which DNA is found. It was a simple experiment using dishwashing



Dr. Fern Tsien (center) with students and faculty from the Departments of Genetics and Biochemistry.

liquid and salt water to break open the cell walls of very ripe strawberries that allowed the kids to have fun smashing the soapy-strawberry mixture inside plastic bags. The gooey mixture was strained, and the final liquid mixed with rubbing alcohol. The DNA, which is visible as a floating clump resembling a cotton ball, could then be picked up using a coffee stirrer or straw.

In addition, kids were able to make their own DNA double helix model using pipe cleaners so they can learn about the structure of the DNA double helix and provide them with their own miniature DNA model they can take home.

The children could also color an animal family tree to illustrate animal heredity and to learn how traits are passed through generations in some of the animals found in the Audubon Zoo.

Finally, participants also learned about how genetics is used in preserving endangered species, how DNA is found inside cells of all living organisms,

different genetics experiments that could be performed at home or at school, how genetics can affect your health, and where you get your genes from.

"We organized the DNA Day event with the goal of making the public aware of the importance of DNA and genetics in our everyday lives," notes Dr. Fern Tsien (Department of Genetics). "Everyone was encouraged to participate in the activities, which were both fun and educational. Kids learned as they performed hands-on experiments using safe ingredients found at home. Parents and teachers benefited from learning interactive projects that they can use at home or in the classroom."



Jacob Loupe and Aditi Iyengar, graduate students in Genetics, demonstrate the isolation of DNA from strawberries.

## Students and Faculty Visit Local Historically Black Universities

Derek Rovaris, Ph.D.

At the end of last semester, the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Multicultural Affairs sponsored several Recruitment Caravans to local universities. Stops were made at Dillard University and Xavier University in New Orleans and at Southern University and LSU in Baton Rouge. These Caravans consisted of informational sessions that included an overview of the Health Sciences Center along with brief

presentations by faculty and staff from each HSC School. Additionally, currently enrolled HSC students who were alums of the visited universities facilitated a student panel that provided insight and advice on their respective programs. Good food and great door prizes were shared with the nearly 200 students and faculty participants from the four universities. The caravans were a big hit and will return in the fall.



Dr. Derek Rovaris (at podium) addresses students and faculty at Xavier University.

# Faculty Assembly Awards

By *Stephania Cormier, Ph.D.*

The faculty assembly, in order to recognize the contributions of faculty to the mission of the School of Medicine, created four faculty awards: Outstanding Service to the Institution (for major, enduring contributions to the development and advancement of the mission of the School of Medicine), Outstanding Service to the Community (for selfless acts that benefit the School of Medicine and those served by the School of Medicine), Outstanding Young Faculty Member (for outstanding accomplishments within the First Three Years of Appointment),

and Outstanding Mentor (for helping build a supportive academic environment, providing a vital resource for student and faculty growth and success, and enhancing excellence in the School of Medicine). While an award could not be made to everyone, it was impressive to see the quality of the applicants and a decision for the best candidate was difficult. Some faculty were nominated numerous times and some faculty were ineligible for further consideration due to their status. Congratulations to this year's winners!

PHOTOS BY LESLIE COPO



Outstanding Young Faculty Member:  
Jesus Lovera, M.D., MsPH (Neurology)



Outstanding Service to the Community:  
Fern Tsien, Ph.D. (Genetics)



Outstanding Service to the Institution:  
Richard Whitworth, Ph.D., (Cell Biology and Anatomy)



Outstanding Mentor:  
Jim Hill, Ph.D. (Ophthalmology)

*All award recipients pictured with Stephen Brierre, M.D., Faculty Assembly President*

Congratulations are also to be extended to the other nominees:

## Outstanding Service to the Institution:

**Carol Mason, M.D., FCCP**

(Pulmonary & Critical Care);

**Emel Songu-Mize, Ph.D.**

(Pharmacology & Experimental Therapeutics);

**Evelyn Kluka, M.D.**

(Otolaryngology);

**James Aiken, M.D., MHA**

(Emergency Medicine)

**Tom Lallier, Ph.D.**

(Cell Biology and Anatomy)

## Outstanding Service to the Community:

**Emel Songu-Mize, Ph.D.**

(Pharmacology & Experimental Therapeutics);

**Ranney Mize, Ph.D.**

(Cell Biology and Anatomy)

**Stephanie Taylor, M.D.**

(Medicine and Microbiology);

## Outstanding Mentor:

**Carol Mason, M.D., FCCP**

(Pulmonary & Critical Care);

**Dean Lauret, M.D.**

(Clinical Medicine - Internal Medicine);

**Lisa Moreno-Walton, M.D.**

(Emergency Medicine);

**William Gordon, Ph.D.**

(Ophthalmology)

## Outstanding Accomplishments by a Young Faculty Member:

**Brian Boulmay, M.D.**

(Clinical Medicine - Hem/Onc);

**John Wallis, M.D.**

(Pediatrics);

**Richard Wainford, Ph.D.**

(Pharmacology);

**Rohan R. Walvekar, M.D.**

(Otolaryngology);

**Udai Pandey, Ph.D.**

(Genetics)

# Change in Faculty Assembly Bylaws

By *Greg Bagby, Ph.D.*

In an open meeting of the Delegates of the Faculty Assembly, Drs. Stephen Brierre (President) and Gregory Bagby (President Elect) informed the faculty of the School of Medicine of a number of proposed changes to its Bylaws ([http://www.medschool.lsuhsu.edu/faculty\\_assembly/](http://www.medschool.lsuhsu.edu/faculty_assembly/)). The proposed changes include streamlining the process for approving changes to the Bylaws, clarifying the role of elected delegates in representing the faculty, simplifying and updating procedures, increasing the number of delegates, and streamlining delegate election and replacement. As part of these changes, a new definition of the Faculty Assembly has also been included in the revisions. In the revised Bylaws, the full-time faculty of the SOM are now referred to as "Faculty", whereas the elected delegates are referred to as the "Assembly". A final vote on these changes was taken at the April 20, 2011 General Faculty meeting where the changes were unanimously accepted.

**Do you want to stay up on the latest that your SOM and Institutional elected officials are talking about?**

Then check the minutes of their meetings at the following sites:

[http://www.medschool.lsuhsu.edu/faculty\\_assembly/minutes.aspx](http://www.medschool.lsuhsu.edu/faculty_assembly/minutes.aspx)  
<http://www.lsuhsu.edu/no/schools/facultysenate/minutes.html>



# Graduation Ceremonies: May 19th, 2011

The annual Commencement Ceremonies for LSUHSC were held Thursday, May 19th, 2011. During the proceedings 180 Medical students and 20 Basic Science students from the School of Medicine (SOM) received their degrees. James R. Andrews, M.D., an LSU SOM alumnus (SOM '67) and an internationally renowned orthopedic surgeon who treats several New Orleans Saints players addressed the graduates.

During the ceremonies the annual Allen A. Copping Excellence in Teaching Awards were presented. Initiated in 1995 by friends and colleagues of Dr. Allen A. Copping, then President of the LSU System, the award recognizes teaching excellence in Allied Health, Dentistry, Medicine – Basic Sciences, Nursing, Medicine – Clinical Medicine, and Public Health. This years SOM recipients are Dr. Stephen Deputy, Assistant Professor of Pediatric Neurology and Dr. Jeffrey Green, Professor of Cell Biology and Anatomy. Congratulations to all of our graduates and to Drs. Deputy and Green!



*"Dr. Stephen Deputy (center) receives his award from Drs. Hollier (left) and Lombardi (right). Unable to be present at the ceremonies – Dr. Jeffrey Green."*



## M.D./Ph.D. News

*by Kathleen McDonough, Ph.D.,  
M.D./Ph.D., Program Director*

Our largest class of MD/PhD students will graduate in May with five of the students completing the dual degree (Sharell Bindom [Pharmacology with Dr. Lazartigues], Caroline Raasch [Physiology with Drs. Zhang and Bagby], Jason Schwartz [Biochemistry with Dr. Vedeckis], Jessica Thomas [MIP with Dr. Amedee] and Jeffrey White [Cell Biology and Anatomy with Dr. Wessely]). They will begin their residency training at UT Southwestern, LSUHSC New Orleans, Vanderbilt, and UT San Antonio. Four of the current graduate students in the program (Tabitha Quebedeaux and Tiffany Eady [Neuroscience with Drs. Bazan, Musto and Belayev], Jesse Sulzer [Physiology with Dr. Molina], Nick Melvan [Physiology with Dr. Zhang]) will complete their PhD training, graduate in May and return to Medical School with the third year class. David Stark (Neuroscience with Dr. Bazan) and Matthew Auten (MIP with Dr. Ramsay) will defend their dissertations in June and return to Medical School.

Our M.D./Ph.D. students have presented their research at national meetings, in particular, Jessica Shields, a Cell Biology and Anatomy graduate student working with Dr. Anne Foundas, attended the American Academy of Neurology meeting in Honolulu (we are all envious of her). In addition, Lori Hutcherson (Cell Biology and Anatomy with Dr. Weyand) and Sun Mi Choi (Genetics with Dr. Kolls) received travel awards to attend the American Physician Scientist Association meeting in Chicago in April. Finally, Nick Melvan received a travel award to attend the Lindau Nobel Laureates Meeting in June. He is one of 570 students from 80 different countries that will participate in the meetings. Not only are they active in the lab and classroom, several of our M.D./Ph.D. students participated in a triathlon to benefit the "Stop the Silence; Stop Child Sexual Abuse" program. Tabitha participated in the full triathlon consisting of a 1.2 mile swim, 56 mile bike ride and 13.1 mile run while Monica Ertel and Tiffany Eady

ran and biked as part of a relay team. They raised over \$2000 for the program. Congratulations!



## We're in the money!

*Our SOM faculty continue to excel in bringing in external funding. Congratulations to the following twenty-four researchers for obtaining extramural funding from federal, state, and independent sources since November 1, 2010:*

### **NIH R37 MERIT Award:**

Jay Kolls, Ph.D. (Genetics)

### **NIH P60 Multidisciplinary Clinical Research Centers:**

Steve Nelson, M.D. (Dean, School of Medicine)

### **NIH T35 Short-Term Institutional Research Training Grant:**

Paula Gregory, Ph.D. (Genetics)

### **NIH R01 Competitive Renewal:**

Hamid Boulares, Ph.D. (Pharmacology)

Augusto Ochoa, M.D. (Director, Cancer Center)

### **NIH K99 Pathway to Independence:**

Robert Siggins, Ph.D. (Physiology)

### **NIH R21:**

Chu Chen, Ph.D. (Neuroscience)

### **NIH R03:**

Catalin Filipeanu, M.D., Ph.D. (Cardiovascular)

### **American Cancer Society:**

Hamid Boulares, Ph.D. (Pharmacology)

### **Louisiana Board of Regents:**

Judy Crabtree, Ph.D. (Genetics)

Diptasri Mandal, Ph.D. (Genetics)

Joy Sturtevant, Ph.D.

(Microbiology, Immunology and Parasitology)

### **Independent Foundations:**

Jerome Breslin, Ph.D. (Physiology)

- Medical Research Foundation

Rebecca Clark, M.D., Ph.D. (Internal Medicine)

- Discovery Lifesciences

Frank Culicchia, M.D. (Neurosurgery)

- Stryker Craniomaxillofacial

Amy Dickson, M.D. (Psychiatry)

- Total Community Action, Inc.

Amparo Gutierrez, M.D. (Internal Medicine)

- Biogen

Kyle Happel, M.D., FCCP (Internal Medicine)

- ParinGenix

Piotr Olejniczak, M.D., Ph.D. (Epilepsy Center)

- Sunovion Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (two independent grants)

Om Prakash, Ph.D. (Cancer Center)

- Cytrx Corporation

Efrain Reisin, M.D., FACP, FASN (Internal Medicine)

- Icon Clinical Research, Inc.

- Keryx Biopharma

Erich Richter, M.D. (Epilepsy Center)

- St. Jude Medical

Richard Tejedor, M.D. (Internal Medicine)

- Actelion

Mark Townsend, M.D. (Psychiatry)

- Pfizer, Inc.

- Ortho Pharmaceutical Corp.

Arnold Zea, Ph.D., (Microbiology, Immunology, and Parasitology)  
Universidad de Antioquia

## The Inside Scope

*In this recurring section of The Pulse we try to answer your questions concerning issues at LSU SOM. One question each issue is chosen by the Editors, who then try to find the person to answer it. Send your questions to any of the Editors at the e-mail addresses listed in the contacts section.*

### **Question: What is the status on the progress to on-site day care?**

#### **Answer (Dean Nelson):**

As you may remember, the on-site daycare project was nearly complete at the time of Hurricane Katrina. The location for the daycare was flooded by the storm, and due to the fact that the Health Sciences Center uses the same design team for all campus projects and the labor pool needed to support the operation was largely gone, the decision was made by central administration to put the daycare center project behind all educational, research and other existing facility projects. There is currently no timeline for the on-site daycare project.



## Seen in the Paper – Making Waves Around the World



**Dr. Daniel Kapusta**



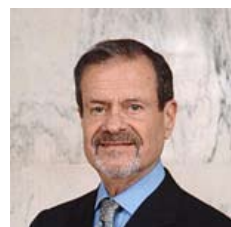
**Dr. Richard Wainford**

**Dr. Daniel Kapusta**, Professor, and **Dr. Richard Wainford**, Assistant Professor, both in the Department of Pharmacology reported in a recent issue of the journal *Endocrinology* (Wainford, R.D. & Kapusta, D.R. "Hypothalamic paraventricular nucleus G alpha q subunit protein pathways mediate vasopressin dysregulation and fluid retention in salt-sensitive rats" *Endocrinology* 151, 5403-14) a model describing how vasopressin secretion is regulated in the hypothalamus of the brain. Vasopressin plays a vital role as the floodgate keeper to prevent excessive loss of water from the kidneys and the regulation of its secretion has been to this point unknown. Their results provide a novel therapeutic target for disease states involving deregulated vasopressin secretion such as heart failure, hepatic cirrhosis, and hypertension.

**Dr. Udai Pandey**, Assistant Professor, Department of Genetics has created the first animal model of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. In a paper recently published in the journal *Human Molecular Genetics* (Lanson, N.A., Jr. et al. "A Drosophila model of FUS-related neurodegeneration reveals genetic interaction between FUS and TDP-43" *Hum Mol Genet* [epub ahead of print]), Dr. Pandey's lab has found in fruit flies that blocking the abnormal movement of a protein made by a mutated gene called FUS also blocks the disease process. These findings provide a simple and inexpensive model to help in identifying potential therapies for ALS.



**Dr. Udai Pandey**



**Dr. Howard Osofsky**

**Dr. Howard Osofsky**, Professor and Chair of Psychiatry is an author of a review article published in a recent issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* (Goldstein, B.D., Osofsky, H.J. & Lichtveld, M.Y. "The Gulf oil spill." *N Engl J Med* 364, 1334) that urgently calls for the development of protocols to deal with the health effects of disasters – before the next one occurs. The recent gulf oil spill, along with 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, underscores both the lack of knowledge about long-term effects as well as the need for better plans to improve interventions and services to deal with the consequences of such crises.



# LSUHSC Postdoctoral Association

by Michelle Kelly, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Association President

The newly formed LSUHSC Postdoctoral Association (PDA) has been incredibly active in the last few months. The PDA is holding a logo design competition for members to submit a PDA logo to be printed on T-shirts. The deadline for submission was April 30th. However, a vote for the best design will be organized at the May general meeting. The website committee has been working hard and the LSUHSC-PDA website is nearly complete and should be up and running soon ([www.lsuhs.edu/no/administration/academics/PDA](http://www.lsuhs.edu/no/administration/academics/PDA)). The social committee held a "Mardi Gras Coffee Break" on March 4th with more "coffee breaks" to be scheduled around holidays and guest speakers. The New Postdoc committee continues to work diligently on securing temporary housing for new post docs. Finally, the Career Development committee will be hosting "round table" discussion starting in late spring, early summer with key speakers covering topics such as "teaching during your post-doc" and "negotiating your way to a faculty position".

Been looking for that perfect in-house Collaboration?

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Looking for the perfect educational assistance?

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[https://www.medschool.lsuhs.edu/faculty\\_interests/SearchResearch.aspx](https://www.medschool.lsuhs.edu/faculty_interests/SearchResearch.aspx)

Search today!

## Association for Women in Science (AWIS)

by Paula Gregory, Ph.D., AWIS President

The South Louisiana Chapter of the Association for Women in Science (AWIS) recently held elections to identify organizational leaders. Congratulations to Paula Gregory, Ph.D. (Genetics) – President; Donna Neumann, Ph.D. (Pharmacology) – Secretary; and Nicole LeCapitaine, Ph.D. (Physiology) – Treasurer. On March 24th, Dr. Gregory

presented a "Work/Life Satisfaction" workshop, which was developed by the National AWIS. Dr. Gregory received an Elsevier Foundation grant to AWIS to attend a "train the trainer" workshop to prepare her to present the session. AWIS meets monthly. For meeting times, please contact Donna Neumann [dneum1@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:dneum1@lsuhsc.edu).

### Send Us Your Stories!

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## AOA inductees

Congratulations to the following individuals for election to membership in the Beta of Louisiana Chapter of the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society:



### Junior Students:

Kevin Bray, Emily Burgin, Juan Carlos de Rivero Vaccari, Patricia Gallagher, Kimberly Hoffpauir, Sophia Mai, Kyle McMullen, Jerry Miller, III, Stephen Spindel, and James Steves.

### House Staff:

Dr. Rebekah Godeaux, Dr. Tathagat "Tiger" Narula, and Dr. Robert "Field" Smith

### Faculty:

Dr. Erich Conrad and Dr. Madeleine "Midge" Heck

### Alumni/Alumnae:

Dr. William Davis and Dr. Evelyn Kluka

## Erratum

In the fall issue of the SOM Newsletter we reported the winners of the poster competitions for the Summer Research Internship Program and the Short-Term Research Experience in Cancer.

In this article, we neglected to publish the winners of the Summer Research Internship Program, Medical Student Symposium:

**Amy Lin**

mentor Dr. Bruce Bunnell,  
Tulane Medical School

**Felix Nau**

mentors Drs. Charles Nichols and Bangning Yu,  
LSUHSC

**Laura Roan**

mentor Dr. Bonnie Dickinson,  
LSUHSC

**Eric Miller**

mentor Dr. Alberto Musto,  
LSUHSC

**John Green**

mentor Dr. Pranab Mukherjee,  
LSUHSC

## Congratulations!

We apologize for our oversight.

## Editor's Pen

Andrew Hollenbach, PhD

I think one of the things I love about working in academics is seeing the fresh new faces of incoming students or new junior faculty eager to start their independent careers. However, the natural flip side of that coin, and one still bittersweet to me, is that eventually we have to say goodbye as the students complete their degree or sometimes as a faculty member moves to another institute or career.

At this bittersweet time as I say goodbye to a colleague and friend, I want to extend a huge word of THANKS to Judith Venuti (Cell Biology and Anatomy), our Editor of Educational Affairs, for all her hard work. Judy has done so much not only for this Newsletter, but also for the SOM Communications Committee, LSU SOM, and the New Orleans community. Through her Herculean teaching efforts, Judy taught Gross Anatomy, among other things, to countless numbers of students. Judy's amazing educational outreach program to the fourth graders in the New Orleans Public Schools contributed to the improved performance of these students on state standardized exams. As vice-chair of the Communications Committee she provided me support and a willingness to assist in recording minutes for the meetings. Finally, as an editor on the Newsletter Judy was instrumental in helping us develop the concept of a Newsletter into a reality. Further, her opinions and ideas kept me on track and many times expanded our vision of what the Newsletter could and has become.

Judy, for all you have done for the Newsletter, for the Communications Committee, for the SOM, and the community.... THANK YOU!

## The Dean's Corner

by Steve Nelson, M.D., Dean School of Medicine

The Chronicle of Higher Education recently published the results of the survey of the top 100 colleges in the United States based on federally funded research <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Top-100-Institutions-in-124626/> with LSU ranking 65th and Tulane University ranking 95th. The 65th ranking represents a significant increase for LSU from its previous position at 77th in 2004. LSU research expenditures in 2009 totaled \$157.6 million. Although this value represents a composite of the research dollars generated from all LSU campuses, the research dollars generated by LSU Health Sciences Center – New Orleans not only represent about 1/3 of the total LSU research funding, but also significantly contribute to our improved ranking. This is a remarkable achievement, particularly when you consider the loss of over \$10.8 million in federal support as a result of Hurricane Katrina. This is the result of the continued efforts of our faculty in applying and successfully competing for extramural support as well as several strategic faculty recruitments. We are encouraged by the success we have realized over the last five years and are looking forward to continued success in the future.

## New Appointments

### Obstetrics and Gynecology

**Amy E. Young, M.D.** has been appointed the new Professor and Department Head of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the Abe Mickal Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She will begin her new position July 2011. Dr. Young is currently on the faculty at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston as the Henry and Emma Meyer Endowed Chair for Education in Obstetrics and Gynecology. At Baylor she is the Executive Vice Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Harris County Hospital District. She is also President Elect of the Association of Professors of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

### Director of Community Health Clinics

**Dr. Mary Thoesen Coleman, M.D., Ph.D.** will join the Dean's Office Staff as Director of Community Health Clinics in the summer. She will work with the Dean and Chancellor on the development of a network of primary care health clinics in the Greater New Orleans area and surrounding regions. Dr. Coleman will also be appointed a professor in the Department of Family Medicine. Dr. Coleman is currently Dean at Ross University School of Medicine.

### Director of the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence

**Dr. Frank Smart, M.D.**, has been appointed the new Section Chief of Cardiology and will serve as the Director of the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence. He is expected to begin his new position this summer. An LSU SOM alumnus, Dr. Smart has served as the Dorothy and Lloyd Huck Chair of the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine Gagnon Atlantic Health, a two-hospital system in northern New Jersey since 2007. He is an internationally recognized expert in heart failure and is renowned for his clinical expertise and his clinical research.

### Surgery

**Robert Batson, M.D.** has agreed to serve in a permanent capacity as the new Department Head of Surgery after graciously serving as Interim Department Head this past fall. Dr. Batson graduated from LSU in Baton Rouge, from our own LSU School of Medicine in New Orleans (AOA), and our Surgery Residency Program. He detoured only for a year to undertake vascular surgery training at Baylor University. He has been active on our faculty since 1975, returning to full-time LSU status in 2007. Dr. Batson is known for his excellent surgical skills, calm demeanor, and deep commitment to the faculty, trainees, and staff in his Department as well as to the LSU School of Medicine.

## Department of Psychiatry Awarded APA 2010 Achievement Award

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) recently awarded the LSUHSC Department of Psychiatry its Gold Medal Achievement award for the St. Bernard Family Resiliency Project (SBFRP), directed by Howard Osofsky, M.D., Ph.D. The SBFRP, originally funded through the Baptist Community Ministries and recently awarded a continuing two-year grant, uses the innovative approach of integrating mental health services into the St. Bernard Parish school system to help children and families

cope with a post-Katrina society thereby minimizing the stigma of getting care and facilitating acceptance of these interventions by the community. Through this program LSUHSC Department of Psychiatry clinicians provide mental health support while also training teachers, administrators and parents about trauma and its effects on children and families. The SBFRP demonstrates that its innovative approach is highly effective and can be used as a national model.





*Sharell Bindom is speechless from one more successful match!*



*Medical student Jimmy White celebrates his match with fiancée Libby Neal*

## Match Day – 2011!

*by Stacey Holman, M.D.*

This year was an outstanding match, and it speaks volumes not only for the future of medical care in Louisiana, but also for the quality of education and preparation provided to us by LSUHSC New Orleans. The Class of 2011 has approximately 60% of the class staying in Louisiana for training in various specialties with about 30% of the class staying right here at LSUHSC-NO. In addition, several students are heading out of state to incredible programs at Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Mayo Clinic, UCLA, University of Washington, University of Pennsylvania, Vanderbilt, and Duke, among others. The School of Medicine is encouraged that over 94% of the positions available at LSU were filled on the first day of match week. It shows continued growth of our training programs at LSU.

## Rural Track

*By Christine L. Manalla  
Coordinator, Rural Scholars Track*

The LSU School of Medicine recognized the graduating members of the Rural Scholars Track (RST) Class of 2011 at two events in April. Ten students in Lafayette and three students in New Orleans, as well as their families and rural physician mentors, gathered to celebrate their achievements and commitment to rural medicine in Louisiana.

Each of these students have committed to practicing primary care in rural Louisiana upon the completion of their residency training. The need for rural primary-care physicians in Louisiana is dire, with more than 30% of our population designated



*Graduating Rural Scholars Track – Lafayette students (from left): Eric Gravois (Napoleonville), Jamie Collins (New Iberia), Devan Szczepanski (Lafayette), Jessica Daigle (Baton Rouge), Micah LeLeux (Moss Bluff), Michelle McCoy (Lafayette), Mathew Whittington (Lafayette), Amy Soileau (Basile), and Stewart Greathouse (Lake Charles). Not pictured Michael Hulin (Lafayette).*

as rural, but only 9% of our physicians practicing there. Including the class of 2011, the Rural Scholars Track has 40 graduates, with 8 RST physicians in practice since 2005.

RST students spend one day a week, every week, of their third and fourth years of medical school working with their rural physicians, or preceptors. This affords them the opportunity to provide continuity care for patients, as well as get an in-depth

look at how a rural practice is managed and maintained. In addition to providing ambulatory care in the clinic setting, students often join their preceptors for inpatient rounding, hospice and nursing-home visits, and clinical procedures. By the completion of medical school, the RST students have a significant head start on understanding the needs and nuances of the delivery of medical care in a rural environment.



*Rural Scholars Track – New Orleans students (from left): Randall Beyl, Smitty Smith, and Garland Anderson II*



# the students' forum

## Camp Tiger Battle of the Bands

by Erin Cabill

Every summer, busses of happy children make their way through the city of New Orleans. Camp Tiger, a weeklong summer camp that is free of charge to children with special needs, offers its campers a chance to be fun, healthy, vibrant children without feeling singled out by their disability!

Started in 1985 by the first year medical class, Camp Tiger is now in its 26th year and the current first year class, Class of 2014, has been working tirelessly to make this year's camp the best yet. The 2011 theme is "Let the Good Times Roll" and symbolizes the continuity of Camp Tiger that is made possible through its wonderful patrons, its LSUHSC family and the New Orleans Community. In keeping with the

Photos by Chi Chi Obih



New Orleans spirit of the theme, campers will "parade" through the city on themed "floats" designed by their bus captains.

Fundraisers this year have been a great success! Over 500 local vendors were involved with the Annual Benefit Auction. The auction, held at the New Orleans Museum of Art, raised a little over \$53,000 and community fundraising efforts have raised an additional \$60,000! The innovation of the Class of 2014 led to two successful new fundraisers. India Stewart, a local artist, designed a Camp Tiger lapel

pin. The pin features a paw-print surrounded by laurel leaves, which symbolize victory; all proceeds go directly to Camp Tiger. Additionally, the 1st Annual Battle of the Bands was held earlier this week at Howlin' Wolf. The concert featured ten medical student bands and raised \$3200 dollars, a tradition the Class of 2014 hopes to leave as their small mark in Camp Tiger history. For more information on Camp Tiger, please visit [www.lsuhs.edu/camptiger](http://www.lsuhs.edu/camptiger).

## Student Publication Highlight

Ellen Connor is a native of Metairie, LA and is a member of the Class of 2013. She became interested in doing research as a biochemistry undergraduate at LSU. This interest led her to enter graduate school at the South Carolina College of Pharmacy in 1999. Under the direction of Michael D. Wyatt, she examined the substrate specificity of an enzyme that initiates the repair of individually damaged DNA bases. Her work elucidated some of the features that the enzyme employs to locate these damaged DNA bases amongst the vast number of normal bases in the genome. Initial work demonstrated that a single amino acid in the enzyme's active site prevents the enzyme from inadvertently removing the normal DNA base guanine and led to her first publication.

<http://www.cell.com/chemistry-biology/retrieve/pii/S1074552102002156>  
Later work identified a novel substrate for the enzyme and elucidated some of the biological effects of altering this type of DNA repair. This work culminated in her receiving her Ph.D. in 2004.



## Family Day 2011

By Danny Eads

The Student Government Association and Dean's Office proudly hosted the annual School of Medicine Family Day on March 26th. Dean Nelson hosted a welcome luncheon for over 600 family and friends in the Student Learning Center after which they enjoyed an interactive tour through our simulation labs and facilities.

However, the hit attraction each year is the class skits. Each class performs a unique representation of their past year in medical school. This year the skits were some of the best in recent time. Guest performances were made by Drs. Swartz and DiCarlo in recorded commercials. While the competition was close, the L3s won with outstanding performances by fictional representations of 3rd year rotations on general surgery with Dr. Cutthroat and internal medicine with Dr. Zebra.

The day would not have been possible without the help of the many volunteer students, faculty, and administrators. We can't express enough gratitude to those who made the day such a success. Thank you all!



## Aesculapian Society banquet

By Michelle Sharp

At this year's annual Aesculapian Society banquet, the Excellence in Teaching Awards was presented to outstanding faculty, resident, and interns.

The members of each class nominate and vote on the awards.

This year the following were honored:

### Awarded from the Class of 2011

Intern: Dana Marshall, MD  
(Medicine/Dermatology)

Resident Award: Andrew Baier, MD  
(Internal Medicine, New Orleans)

Faculty: Guido DeJesus, MD  
(Internal Medicine, Baton Rouge)

Junior Faculty:  
Jason Mussell, PhD (Cell Biology & Anatomy)

### Awarded from the Class of 2012

Intern: Celeste Gary, MD (Otorhinolaryngology)

Resident: Ares Christakis, MD (Surgery)

Faculty: Fred Lopez, MD (Internal Medicine, New Orleans)

### Awarded from the Class of 2013

Fall: Giovanni Lorusso, MD (Pathology)

Spring: Arthur Zieske, MD (Pathology)

### Awarded from the Class of 2014

Fall: William Swartz, PhD (Cell Biology & Anatomy)

Spring: Michael Levitzky, PhD (Physiology)



## Tiger Run

By Christian Hernandez

The 24th annual Tiger Run 5K was held at Audubon Park on Sunday April 3rd, 2011 and we are proud to say that the event was a huge success! This year was a particularly special year for the medical student body due to the memorialization of Nicole Murphy, a member of the Class of 2012 who was tragically killed last summer. Nicole was an extraordinary student and avid athlete who embodied what Tiger Run strives to reflect: a strong commitment to community service and the promotion of personal well-being. It was for these reasons that the medical student body decided to honor Nicole's memory by officially renaming the event to the Nicole Murphy Memorial Tiger Run.

The event attracted over 300 participants and raised nearly \$6000 for the Student Run Homeless Clinics and other student-organized community projects, making it one of the most successful in Tiger Run history! Race day participants enjoyed a beautiful day of fun, food, and music with friends and family, all while helping support our student-run charity projects! Thank you to all who helped make this year's event so successful!



## Student Spotlight

- Questions with **Annette Zacharia**

**What did you do before you came to medical school?**

I attended LSU in Baton Rouge, where I majored in Biology.



**Describe the impact Camp Tiger had on you.**

Not only did I develop communication and leadership skills that will carry on with me for the rest of my career, but above all I learned the importance of empathy. It was one of the most humbling, yet self-gratifying experiences ever.

**What is your favorite memory from Camp Tiger 2010?**

On the last day of Camp Tiger a parent came up to me and said, "I've never seen my child so happy before. Thank you for giving him this opportunity."

**What has been your favorite course in your first two years of medical school?**

Anatomy. The professors were all so enthusiastic and whole-heartedly dedicated to teaching,

**Do you have any advice for the Class of 2014 for their L2 year?**

The shock and fears of medical school wear off. You develop a better sense of what's expected from you. So, make time for fun and try to maintain a positive attitude! If you're ever feeling down, just keep singing, "Woah-oh, we're half-way there!"

**Do you have any thoughts on what you want to do after graduation?**

Right now, I'm interested in pediatrics and internal medicine.

**What is your dream project you would like to accomplish?**

In the future I'd love to start free clinics in some of the poverty stricken areas of India. I hope to use the skills and knowledge I obtain to not only serve patients in this country, but also those where healthcare may not be as accessible.

**Something about you not many people know?**

I took Indian Classical Dance for eight years.

The Students' Forum is a section of the Newsletter for and by medical and basic science students in the SOM. Please contact Kevin Gipson, the Students' Forum editor, if you have any story ideas.





## Did you know...

that **Samuel Portera**, who works as a medical technologist at University Hospital, is an accomplished photographer? His work has been shown at the Louisiana State Museum, New York City, and in Black and White magazine.

<http://www.samuelportera.com/>

## who DAT!

### Dianne S. Jones



*If you know of someone who you feel should be featured in the who DAT! section, please contact us.*

#### Position:

Administrative Coordinator in the Parking Office

#### Years of service:

Over 20 years

#### Favorite part of your job:

Meeting different people on a daily basis.

#### Least favorite part of your job:

Registration! The lines are out the door and down the hall!

#### Hobbies/likes/dislikes:

Reading, shopping, and watching Saints games

#### What would you like people to know about you:

Dianne is affectionately known as "Miss D". She was born and raised in New Orleans and as such she is a die-hard New Orleanian. "I love the city, I love the music, and I love the food!"

- interview by Cathi Fontenot  
(CEO/COO, LSU Healthcare Network)

*Hey Basic  
Sciences  
what is YOUR  
response rate to the  
Faculty Interests  
Database?*



**The top?  
The bottom?  
Somewhere in between?**

**Anatomy and Cell Biology**  
100%

**Cardiovascular**  
100%

**Microbiology and Immunology**  
100%

**Molecular and Human Genetics**  
100%

**Pharmacology**  
95%

**Neuroscience**  
90%

**Cancer Center**  
86%

**Oral & Craniofacial Biology**  
83%

**Genetics**  
78%

**Physiology**  
64%

**Biochemistry**  
55%

**Alcohol & Drug Abuse**  
1%

**Comprehensive Dentistry  
and Biomaterial**  
0%

#### Don't want to be last?

Then go to the following link and fill in your information now!

[https://www.medschool.lsuhs.edu/faculty\\_interests/SearchResearch.aspx](https://www.medschool.lsuhs.edu/faculty_interests/SearchResearch.aspx)

**Do you want to be  
inspired by who we are  
and what we do?**

Then take a look at this video produced  
and created by our very own Leslie Capo!  
[https://intranet.lsuhs.edu/LSUHSC\\_Difference.htm](https://intranet.lsuhs.edu/LSUHSC_Difference.htm)